

### **REMARKS**

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-22 are pending in the present application, with claims 1, 5, 13, and 15 being independent.

#### ***Information Disclosure Statement***

On November 28, 2001, May 17, 2002, December 16, 2002, September 20, 2004, and December 9, 2004, Applicants submitted Information Disclosure Statements. Presently, there is no indication in the record that the Examiner has considered these Information Disclosure Statements. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner initial the attached copies of the PTO-1449 Form that were previously submitted and return these initialed and signed forms to the undersigned.

#### ***Double Patenting***

The Examiner provisionally rejected claims 1-22 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-46 of co-pending application No. 09/627,058 (which is the parent application). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims of the present application and the claims of application No. 09/627,058 are patentably distinct. On March 22, 2005, Applicants amended the claims in application No. 09/627,058. Because of the amendments made to the claims of

application No. 09/627,058, the claims of the present application are not an obvious variation of the claims of application No. 09/627,058.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the provisional rejection is respectfully requested.

In an effort to expedite the prosecution of the present application, Applicants would consider filing a Terminal Disclaimer, however, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner first indicate whether or not claims 1-22 of the present application would be allowable.

***Conclusion***

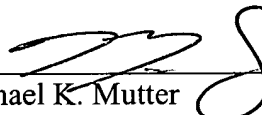
In view of the above amendments and remarks, this application appears to be in condition for allowance and the Examiner is, therefore, requested to reexamine the application and pass the claims to issue.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Martin Geissler (Reg. 51,011) at telephone number (703) 205-8000, which is located in the Washington, DC area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

**Date: December 12, 2005**

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Copies of PTO-1449 Forms (5)